

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Accra-Fab Inc.

Impact Washington

Accra-Fab, Inc. Gets Lean with Help from Impact Washington

Client Profile:

Accra-Fab, Inc., located in Liberty Lake, Washington provides custom metal fabrication and manufacturing for companies throughout the world. Accra-Fab has been in business since 1979 and employs 50 people.

Situation:

Accra-Fab learned about Lean Manufacturing after attending a Lean 101 workshop provided by Impact Washington (formerly known as Washington Manufacturing Services), a NIST MEP network affiliate. Previously, the company had brought in a firm for a six-month Lean project; however, the Lean gains initially implemented did not work. To solve the problem, Accra-Fab contacted Impact Washington to implement a more comprehensive, sustainable Lean strategy.

Solution:

Impact Washington assisted Accra-Fab with accessing grant funding through the Spokane Community College. This partnership with the community college not only provided funding for the project, but it also allowed Impact Washington to provide training in Lean, math, blueprint reading, and Training Within Industry (TWI), all of which not only created improvements, but provided the training foundation for sustainability of the Lean gains. Impact Washington provided the crucial project management role for the various improvement initiatives and training resources. Impact Washington brought in Karl Webber to implement Lean, creating a Value Stream Map and conducting several Kaizen events. Charles "Luke" Lukey, Impact Washington process specialist, conducted the TWI training. The Community Colleges of Spokane conducted math and blueprint reading classes for company employees. As a result of Impact Washington's assistance, Accra-Fab has the capacity to develop ideas for new products and markets.

Results:

- * Reduced floor space by 50 percent.

Testimonial:

"The relationship between Impact Washington and Spokane College was critical in keeping the project going. Karl Webber gave the project instant credibility due to his rapport with workers and his Lean knowledge. Impact Washington was easy to work with and met our needs upon request."

Barry Stewart, General Manager